



**VA HEALTH CARE**  
Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

# Veteran Connection

VA Portland Health Care System Newsletter



Keeping the



Advancing Excellence

## VA Portland Health Care System

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Produced by the VAPORHCS  
Public Affairs Office

### QUESTIONS / COMMENTS ??

Please email us at...

VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov

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For all the **VAPORHCS Events and Classes**—got to the VAPORHCS Web page...

<http://www.portland.va.gov/calendar.asp>

## Welcome from the Director



Joanne M. Krumberger  
Director, VA Portland Health Care System

Good day:

We are embarking on a new fiscal year this month in the VA and I equate this to New Years - a reason and opportunity to take a fresh perspective on things or to re-new those priorities and commitments already in progress. My promise to our Veterans is a continued pledge in the VA Portland Health Care System to focus on ensuring unceasing improvement to patient experience and satisfaction, sustaining the highest quality of care possible, and ensuring our employees have the resources and support they need to provide that care.

We will remain committed to our sacred and noble mission to "care for him who has borne the battle, and his widow and his orphan." There is no higher calling. We will live and uphold our ICARE Values, acting with Integrity, demonstrate Commitment, Advocate for our Veterans and their family members, treat all patients and family members with Respect, and always strive for Excellence in all that we do.

One means we use to help us understand and address Veteran issues, priorities and concerns is our Veteran Town Halls. It is highlighted in this newsletter, but I want to be sure and personally invite you to attend the next **Veterans Town Hall** scheduled for **December 9, 2014, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the VAPORHCS Vancouver Campus Columbia Room.** We will be promoting this event through multiple means at all of our facilities with signage, using the Web, Social Media and direct email to include mailing notifications to our Veterans Service Organization partners to post in their facilities. I would greatly appreciate your assistance in letting Veterans know about this opportunity. I do plan to hold these events alternating between Portland and Vancouver. We are looking at providing Video Teleconferencing at some of our CBOCs as an alternative for those Veterans who cannot make it to the Portland-Vancouver area in person. More details will be communicated soon.

As always, thank you again for your continued support to our Veterans and the VA Portland Health Care System.

Sincerely,

*Joanne M. Krumberger*

## Veteran & Family Advisory Council Forming Soon

A new Veteran & Family Advisory Council is currently being formed. The VFAC will consist of 12-18 non-staff Veterans, and family members of Veterans, who meet monthly and serve as advisors to our leadership team. Applications of interested Veterans will be available in November and will include an interview process.

Contact Valdez Bravo at (503)220-8262 ext. 53082 or [valdez.bravo@va.gov](mailto:valdez.bravo@va.gov).

Join us at VAPORHCS—Portland Division for a Veterans Day Movie Muster on Tuesday, Nov. 11 in the Auditorium. Enjoy free movies, popcorn, drinks, and cookies! All are welcome to watch at 9 a.m. "No Time for Sergeants" (1958), 11:30 a.m. "Music Within" (2007, filmed in Portland), and 2 p.m. "The Hunt for Red October" (1990). None of these films have traumatic situations (triggers).

If you would like to be added to the VAPORHCS Partner email list, please email us at [VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov](mailto:VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov)

## New Lincoln City CBOC holds open house and grand opening Sept. 26



Members of the newest VAPORHCS Center Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Lincoln City pose after the official opening ceremony/open house on September 26. Pictured in front is Dr. Arlene Brady, the clinic's physician, from left to right is Clinic Manager Carol A. Hall, RN; Clinic Assistant Michelle (Shelly) Sweat; Clinic RN Angela (Angie) Tramelli; and Office Assistant Victor Irizarry.

About 45 Veterans, community leaders and staff attended the VA Portland Health Care System Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Lincoln City official opening ceremony/open house on September 26. VAPORHCS Director Joanne M. Krumberger spoke at the event as well as Lincoln City Mayor Dick Anderson, and Rebecca McBee-Wilson, Director of the Lincoln Community Health Center Director.

Thank you to the Lincoln County Health and Human Services and the Lincoln County Board of Commission-

ers who were instrumental in making this VA clinic come to fruition!

The clinic has been operating one day per week on Fridays since June 20, 2014 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For more info go to the [VAPORHCS Web site](#)

## Feedback from questions/comments during September Veterans Town Halls

*Information and references in response to the Sept. 23 and Sept. 30 VAPORHCS Veteran Town*

### Gulf War Veteran's Illnesses

Certain illnesses are associated with Gulf War service in the [Southwest Asia theater of military operations](#) during the first Gulf War starting August 2, 1990 through the conflict in Iraq.

VA offers eligible Veterans a free [Gulf War Registry health exam](#) to find possible long-term health problems related to Gulf War service. - See more on the [VHA Web site](#).

### Veteran clothing allowance

Veterans who have unique clothing needs as a result of a service-related disability or injury may receive a supplement to their disability compensation. The clothing allowance reimburses you if your clothing gets permanently damaged by a prosthetic or orthopedic appliance you wear, or by a prescribed medication you use on your skin. If eligible, you can receive a one-time or yearly allowance for reimbursement. Go to the [VHA Web site](#) for more detailed information.

A specific question came up during the Veterans Town Hall about the standard policy for when a clothing allowance is denied— For VISN 20 (including VAPORHCS), it is to send a letter to the Veteran informing him or her of the denial, and include information on how to appeal. If a Veteran does not receive this letter, they should contact the Supervisory Prosthetic Representative for the area. For VAPORHCS patients, call the Prosthetics Department at (503) 273-5099.

## Mark your calendars! VAPORHCS Veterans Town Hall - Dec. 9 in Vancouver

**When:** Tues., Sept. 9, 2014 at 5–6:30 p.m. **Where:** VAPORHCS Vancouver Campus, Columbia Room at 1601 E. 4th Plain Blvd Vancouver, WA 98661 **Who:** Veterans, family members & caregivers **Why:** Share information, answer questions and address concerns.



## Continued — Feedback from questions/comments from Veterans Town Halls

### Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act

New [VA Web site on Choice Act](#) as of Oct. 17

On August 7, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-146) ("Choice Act"). Technical revisions to the Choice Act were made on September 26, 2014, when the President signed into law the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-175).

VA's goal continues to be to provide timely, high-quality healthcare for Veterans. Veterans and VA employees nationwide understand the need for reform, and VA is committed to putting these reforms into place.

As this process continues to move forward, VA will work with other Departments, Congress, Veterans Service Organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that provisions are implemented as quickly and efficiently as possible.

As information becomes available—this [Web site](#) ([www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/](http://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/)) will be one of the first places you will find it.

When we at VAPORHCS find out anything new, we will share—here are links to some of the latest topics...

Fact Sheets: What is VA doing under the Choice Act to improve health care for Veterans?

- [New Medical Center Employee Training Program on Appointment Scheduling Process \(Section 303\)](#)
- [Veterans Choice Program \(Section 101-103, 105-106\)](#)
- [Extended Care for Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury \(Section 501\)](#)
- [Services for Those Affected by Military Sexual Trauma \(Section 401-403\)](#)
- [Modification of VA Medical Center Employee Performance Plans \(Section 205\)](#)



### VAPORHCSMOVE! Program support for Veterans

Volunteers wanted for Mover Buddy Support program

**M**OVE! and Move Buddy are National VA programs. If a Veteran or volunteer has an interest in nutrition/exercise/weight management and would like to serve as a support system for Veterans who have enrolled in the MOVE! Program, we do have a MOVE! Buddy Volunteer program through Voluntary Services. This person can work one on one with Veterans through phone, email or face to face contact or they can lead support groups. They will receive specific MOVE! Buddy training once they have been through the Voluntary Services process. Are YOU interested in volunteering?

Contact H. Carmen Caraballo

[Helga.Caraballo@va.gov](mailto:Helga.Caraballo@va.gov)

Portland MOVE! Program Coordinator  
360-696-4061 ext. 34013

### Veterans Transportation Task Force

**Volunteers, VSOs and NGOs wanted** to join effort to improve transportation in Oregon and SW Washington for Veterans to help them get to their health care

VAPORHCS is looking for a Veteran Service Organization representative to help co-chair a *Veterans Transportation Task Force*. We also need other interested volunteers to include non-profit/non-government organizations and Veterans.

We want to work collaboratively with these partners to identify real transportation issues/challenges for Veterans who get care at the VA; identify potential resources/organizations and means to address the issues and challenges; get these owners/influencers to the table to start developing solutions, and then see them through to help make a real difference in getting Veterans to the care they need and deserve.

Interested?

Contact Monty M. Hughes, VAPORHCS Mobility Manager  
(503)220-8262, Ext. 53423

[Monty.Hughes@va.gov](mailto:Monty.Hughes@va.gov)

## U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and VA Supportive Housing Program

### A HUD-VASH Success Story...



**F**redric Alan Maxwell, U.S. Navy '73-'79, surpassed his first anniversary this winter in permanent housing in Portland with the help of the Portland VA, community partners, and the HUD-VASH program after spending the previous five-plus

years in more than 45 different places across the country without a home.

"This is the first time in years my overall health is improving and my heart condition is finally stabilizing," said Fredric who, several years ago, had a series of serious cardiac issues that led to him losing his job and his home. "There is no medical reason now that I won't live until I'm at least 90 years old. When I was homeless, that certainly was not the case. It was nearly impossible to appropriately take care of myself and get the care I need-

ed; I was more focused on where I'd sleep and where I'd get my next meal."

The Department of Housing and Urban Development - VA Supportive Housing (HUDVASH) Program is a joint effort between HUD and VA to move Veterans and their families out of homelessness and into permanent housing. In 2013, the Portland Community rallied to the support of the HUD-VASH program and Veterans like Fredric. Although the HUD-VASH program provides for a Section 8 housing voucher through HUD and intensive case management services through the VA, the program did not provide the needed money to attain housing. Multnomah County, United Way, Home Forward, and the City of Portland each contributed to a flexible spending fund that is managed by JOIN, a community non-profit homeless program to fill this gap.

"The VA case workers have been great facilitating me getting into this place, removing barriers that might have prevented it, getting me hooked up with the health care I need, and connecting me to resources," said Fredric. "One of the biggest obstacles was the deposits; I simply did not have the cash to get into a place like this - the community partners made that happen. They even helped me get Her Majesty Albus the First - my cat, who really owns me."

### VAPORHCS Homeless programs

#### VAPORHCS main program overviews...

1. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and VA Supportive Housing Program (HUD-VASH)
2. The Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program funds community-based agencies providing transitional housing or service centers for homeless Veterans. Through the program, each year (as funding is available) VA offers grants that may fund up to 65 percent of the project for the construction, acquisition or renovation of facilities or to purchase vans to provide outreach and services to homeless Veterans.
3. Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) is a vocational rehabilitation program that endeavors to match and support work ready Veterans in competitive jobs, and to consult with business and industry regarding their specific employment needs.

To see more stories about  
 VA Portland Health Care System  
 Homeless Programs and other services,  
 Please see the [2013 Annual Report](#) on our Web  
 site under ["About Us"](#)

### VA signs lease for new East CBOC

#### New CBOC slated to open in fiscal year 2016

**W**e at VAPORHCS are excited to announce that VA Central Office signed a lease on September 30, 2014 for property in Fairview, Oregon to build a new Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC).

The new 26,000 square foot facility still to be designed and built will replace the current 7,500 square foot facility currently located in the Gateway Medical Bldg. located at 10535 NE Glisan Street, in Portland.

Currently, the [East Portland CBOC](#) offers Primary Care, Laboratory Services and Mental Health Services. An assessment is currently underway to determine potential additional services to offer at the new clinic.



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